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ARTISTIC NEEDLEWORK.

BY EMMA HAYWOOD.



It is with much pleasure that I present to our readers the consideration of a continuation of the beautiful designs by Mrs. Barnes-Bruce of artistic needlework for table decoration. The May number of *THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER* contained a working-size practical design of a centrepiece and dessert doily to match, the motive being the ever-popular wild rose, gracefully combined with

Honiton lace braid as a finish for the outside edge.

It would seem that designs to complete the set for table use must surely be acceptable, and we therefore publish designs herewith for a dinner-plate doily and sideboard scarf, with extra sprays of wild rose, which can be substituted for the honeysuckle on the scarf if preferred, or they can be adapted for use on extra pieces if required, the designs being one-fourth actual size. I may mention here that Mrs. Barnes-Bruce is prepared to supply designs to match for extra pieces, such as napkins, sherbet or tumbler doilies, or plate doilies of extra size suitable for polished tables; these last may also be utilized for placing on either side of the centrepiece for extra vases of flowers or for fruit dishes.

In the May number a very detailed description was given of the exact method of working out the designs, also the colors to be used in the Asiatic dye filo-floss were accurately described, the numbers attached to each shade being given, so that no mistake would be made. The choosing of colors, even when a scheme is given, is often a great stumbling-block to the inexperienced. Moreover, it frequently happens that one is not within reach of a supply-store; to any so placed, to be able to order exactly what is wanted by letter will, doubtless, be found a great convenience. It is our chief aim to be thoroughly practical, down to the smallest detail.

With regard to the plate doily, therefore, little or nothing remains to be said, but I would reiterate that it is best to begin with the embroidery, completing it entirely before starting on the lace-work. The pattern of the braid should accord with that on the centrepiece and doilies, but so long as the braid is chosen to exactly fit the design the pattern may be left to individual choice, with the suggestion that for this particular style of work an open filling gives the best results—such, for instance, as is indicated for the sideboard scarf in the finished section.

The sideboard scarf is a triumph of daintiness; the corner, with its varied fillings of lace stitches, is a charming novelty, with the added advantage that it really takes very little time to do it. It may be noted that the outside edge is vandyked instead of scalloped, by way of variety; also that the long and short stitches are employed to appliqué the braid on to the linen, the buttonhole edge being on the braid—two or three short stitches are taken between each long one. The neatest way of finishing the back in this case is to turn the raw edges in and hem them after the work has been removed from the paper foundation and the linen at back of the braid is cut away.

With regard to the lace-stitch fillings, as much variety as possible should be introduced—quite a choice is given in the illustration. Perhaps it may be helpful to the beginner to

describe the method of working minutely. They are all of the kind frequently used in Mexican drawn-work. The lace thread must be heavy enough to accord with the braid when only a few—say six or eight—cross-threads are employed as a foundation, then it is better to twist the bars—they look richer and are stronger; but when a great many are put in as a foundation, then a single thread is sufficient. The extreme corner is filled with the ordinary well-known wheel, the thread being taken over and under until the circle is large enough. The two fillings immediately over the centre are executed in precisely the same manner, each section being worked over and under four threads, starting from the centre, until the point is reached, where the work is over two threads only. The outside fillings are darned in the centre when working the crossed threads. The dotted filling in the finished sec-

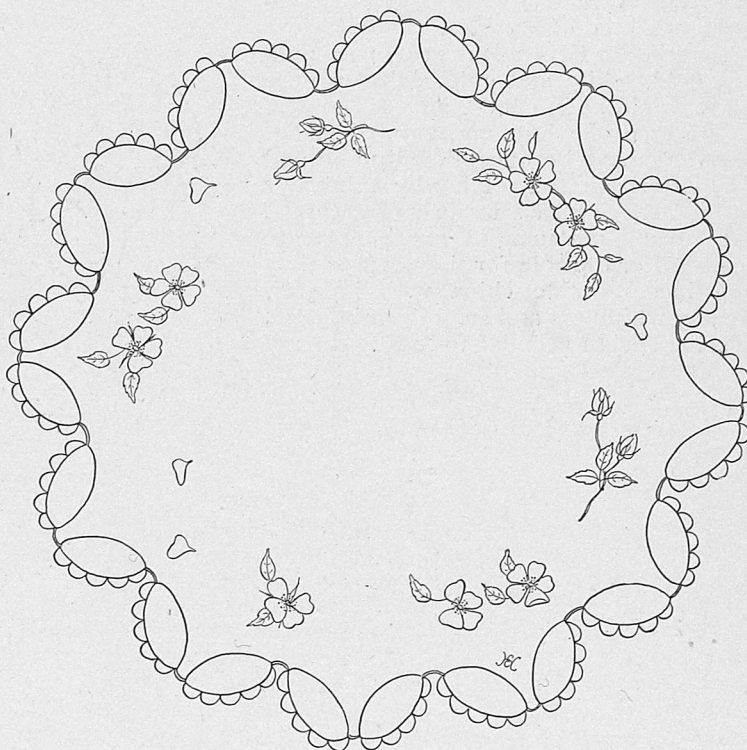


PLATE DOILY IN LACE AND EMBROIDERY.

tion is carried out with tiny wheels on the crossed threads, but this necessitates twisted bars. This elegant sideboard scarf could be readily adapted for a tea tablecloth, it being only necessary to turn it into a square; the pattern can be repeated to any required length. Rose-sprays can be easily arranged in place of the honeysuckle if preferred.

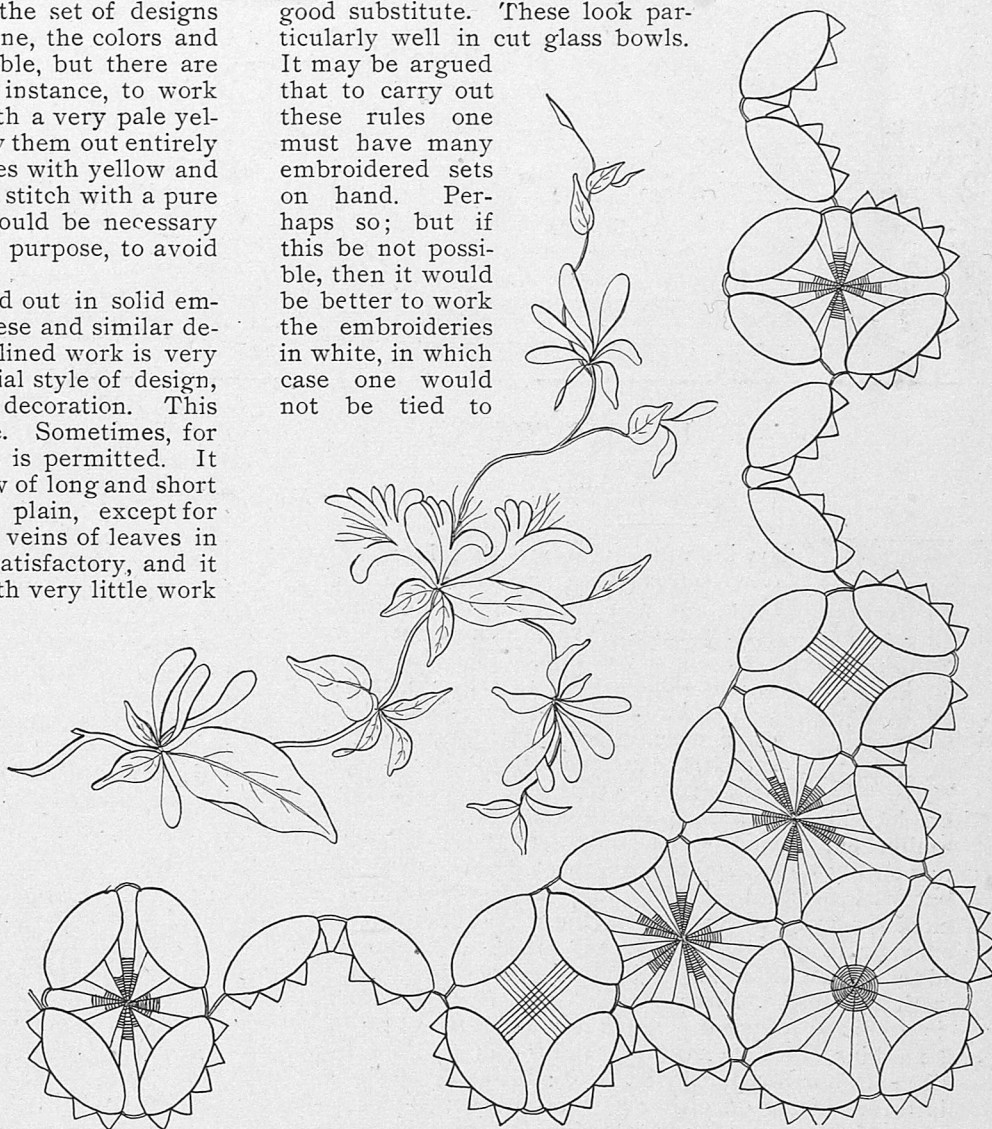
With regard to the coloring, exactly the same shades will serve for both rose and honeysuckle. They can be used with a due regard to harmony at one and the same time; indeed, one need never be tied to one flower for a whole set, but the fitness of grouping certain flowers together should always be considered. There can be no question of the propriety of grouping together the wild rose and the honeysuckle, but it would be exceedingly incongruous to bring into juxtaposition the wild rose and an orchid, for instance, or some delicate hot-house blooms.

The scheme suggested for working out the set of designs in this and the May number is a realistic one, the colors and shading to be as true to nature as possible, but there are other methods that are very pleasing—for instance, to work them in cream white, delicately shaded with a very pale yellowish green. Yet another plan is to carry them out entirely in white, indicating the stamens of the roses with yellow and outlining the whole design in close stem stitch with a pure gold color; for the very small flowers it would be necessary to split a single strand of filo-floss for the purpose, to avoid clumsiness in the curves.

In every case the work is to be carried out in solid embroidery, with long and short stitch. These and similar designs never look well in outline only. Outlined work is very effective in its way, but it calls for a special style of design, suitable more especially for furniture decoration. This method I hope to discuss in a future issue. Sometimes, for every-day table sets, a sort of compromise is permitted. It consists of defining the flower with one row of long and short stitch from the outer edge, leaving the rest plain, except for putting in the stamens of flowers and the veins of leaves in the foliage; but this plan is never quite satisfactory, and it would be far better to choose a design with very little work in it put in solidly, rather than to resort to this sketchy, semi-solid method with more elaborate pattern.

Before closing I should like to offer a few remarks on the setting of a table for which the above embroideries are destined. In the first place, it is a great mistake to use china decorated with the same flower that is embroidered; it engenders a kind of fussiness that destroys true repose. Green and gold, pale pink and gold, white and gold, or even pure white would be in good taste. Of course, in the case of white, undecorated china, the ware must be exceptionally fine and the pattern chaste. I hardly think our native Belleek ware is made in dinner-sets, but I could not imagine anything more beautiful or durable for the purpose than this incomparable china with its soft, creamy whiteness and smooth satin gloss, in some design peculiar to itself. In my

good substitute. These look particularly well in cut glass bowls. It may be argued that to carry out these rules one must have many embroidered sets on hand. Perhaps so; but if this be not possible, then it would be better to work the embroideries in white, in which case one would not be tied to

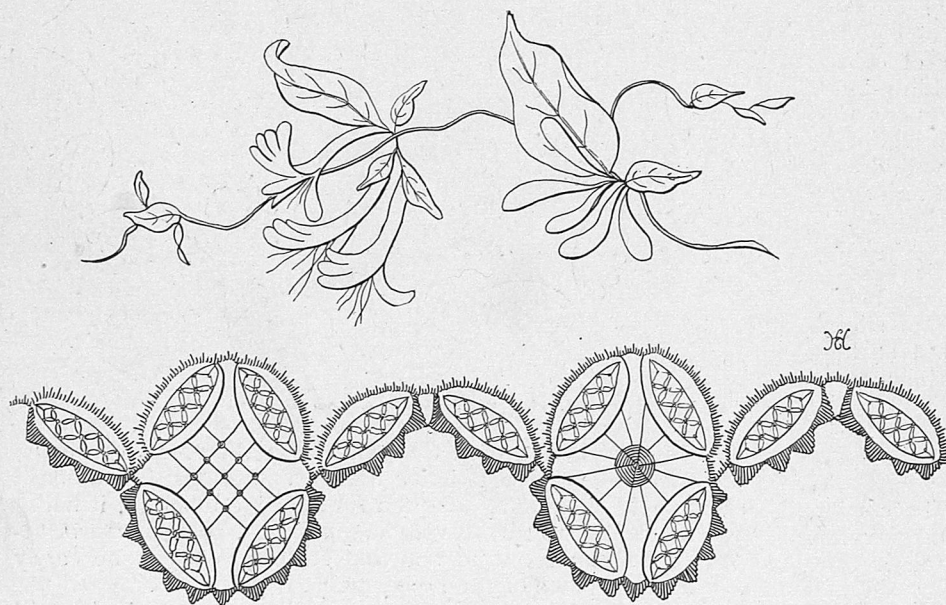


CORNER OF SIDEBOARD SCARF.

color for the natural flowers; or else to choose a conventional design for the table-set, working it in white or white and gold, the design being of such a nature that it would not clash with anything placed upon it.

TESTS FOR TEXTILES.

THE following tests for textile fibres may be of use to our readers: (1) Microscopic appearance. (2) Cotton burns without smell, while wool and silk shrivel up and give off the odor of burning animal matter. (3) A boiling solution of caustic alkali dissolves silk and wool, but has little action on cotton. (4) Concentrated sulphuric acid dissolves cotton and silk in the cold, while wool is little affected. (5) Schwertzer's reagent (ammoniacal solution of oxide of copper) dissolves cotton and silk, but not wool. Cellulose is reprecipitated by gum, sugar, or acids, but the silk substance by acids alone. (6) A solution of basic chloride of zinc dissolves silk, but not cotton or wool. (7) A solution of cotton in concentrated sulphuric acid gives a purple coloration with an alcoholic solution of alpha-naphthol. This reaction really indicates the presence of sugar, and is therefore not given by silk or wool. (8) Million's reagent (mercurous-mercuric nitrate) gives a red color with silk or wool, but not with cotton. (9) Wool (also hair and fur) is blackened by heating with a dilute solution of plumbite of soda, which is prepared by dissolving litharge in caustic soda, but not silk or cotton.



FRONT OF SIDEBOARD SCARF.

humble opinion, painting on Belleek ware detracts from its natural beauty. But I am digressing. With regard to the natural floral decorations, the same rule applies as already referred to, with regard to mixing incongruous flowers in the embroideries. It is not permissible to place hot-house flowers on the top of wild roses, but any garden flower that accords in color may be used without hesitation; if such be not obtainable, then foliage and ferns by themselves are always a